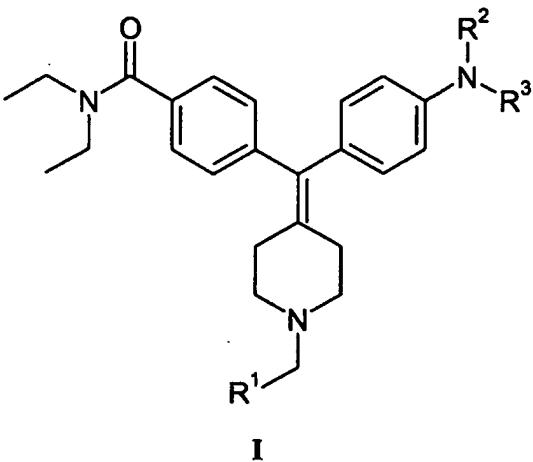


What is claimed is :

1. A compound of formula I, a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, diastereomers, enantiomers, or mixtures thereof:



5

wherein

R¹ is selected from C₆₋₁₀aryl and C₂₋₆heteroaryl, wherein said C₆₋₁₀aryl and C₂₋₆heteroaryl are optionally substituted with one or more groups selected from -R,
 10 -NO₂, -OR, -Cl, -Br, -I, -F, -CF₃, -C(=O)R, -C(=O)OH, -NH₂, -SH, -NHR, -NR₂, -SR,
 -SO₃H, -SO₂R, -S(=O)R, -CN, -OH, -C(=O)OR, -C(=O)NR₂, -NRC(=O)R, and
 -NRC(=O)-OR, wherein R is, independently, a hydrogen or C₁₋₆alkyl;

R² is selected from C₁₋₃alkyl and hydrogen; and

R³ is selected from hydrogen, -C(=O)-R⁴, -S(=O)₂-R⁴, and -C(=O)-O-R⁴,
 15 wherein R⁴ is selected from -H, C₁₋₆alkyl, C₂₋₆alkenyl and C₂₋₆alkynyl.

2. A compound according to claim 1,
 wherein R¹ is selected from phenyl; thiadiazolyl, pyridyl; thienyl; furyl; imidazolyl; triazolyl; pyrrolyl; thiazolyl; and N-oxido-pyridyl, wherein said R¹ is
 20 further optionally substituted with one or more groups selected from C₁₋₆alkyl, halogenated C₁₋₆alkyl, -NO₂, -CF₃, C₁₋₆alkoxy, chloro, fluoro, bromo, and iodo;
 R² is selected from C₁₋₃alkyl and hydrogen; and
 R³ is selected from hydrogen, -C(=O)-R⁴, -S(=O)₂-R⁴, and -C(=O)-O-R⁴,
 wherein R⁴ is C₁₋₆alkyl.

3. A compound according to claim 1,
wherein R¹ is selected from phenyl; pyridyl; thiadiazolyl and thiazolyl,
wherein R¹ is further optionally substituted with one or more groups selected from C₁-
alkyl, halogenated C₁-alkyl, -NO₂, -CF₃, C₁-6 alkoxy, chloro, fluoro, bromo, and
5 iodo;

R² is hydrogen; and
R³ is selected from hydrogen, -C(=O)-R⁴, -S(=O)₂-R⁴, and -C(=O)-O-R⁴,
wherein R⁴ is C₁-3alkyl.

10 4. A compound according to claim 1, wherein
wherein R¹ is selected from phenyl; 2-fluorophenyl; 3-fluorophenyl; 4-
fluorophenyl; 2-pyridyl; 3-pyridyl; 4-pyridyl; 1,2,3-thiadiazol-4-yl; 4-thiazolyl and 5-
thiazolyl;
R² is hydrogen; and
15 R³ is selected from hydrogen, -C(=O)-CH₃, -S(=O)₂-CH₃, and -C(=O)-O-CH₃.

5. A compound according to claim 1, wherein the compound is selected from:
4-[(4-aminophenyl)(1-benzylpiperidin-4-ylidene)methyl]-N,N-diethylbenzamide;
4-[[4-(acetylamino)phenyl](1-benzylpiperidin-4-ylidene)methyl]-N,N-
20 diethylbenzamide;
4-{{[4-(acetylamino)phenyl][1-(pyridin-2-ylmethyl)piperidin-4-ylidene]methyl}-N,N-
diethylbenzamide;
4-{{[4-(acetylamino)phenyl][1-(pyridin-3-ylmethyl)piperidin-4-ylidene]methyl}-N,N-
diethylbenzamide;
25 4-{{[4-(acetylamino)phenyl][1-(pyridin-4-ylmethyl)piperidin-4-ylidene]methyl}-N,N-
diethylbenzamide;
4-{{[4-(acetylamino)phenyl][1-(1,2,3-thiadiazol-4-ylmethyl)piperidin-4-
ylidene]methyl}-N,N-diethylbenzamide;
4-{{[4-(acetylamino)phenyl][1-(1,3-thiazol-5-ylmethyl)piperidin-4-ylidene]methyl}-
30 N,N-diethylbenzamide;
4-{{[4-(acetylamino)phenyl][1-(1,3-thiazol-4-ylmethyl)piperidin-4-ylidene]methyl}-
N,N-diethylbenzamide;

4-((1-benzylpiperidin-4-ylidene){4-[(methylsulfonyl)amino]phenyl}methyl)-*N,N*-diethylbenzamide;

methyl 4-((1-benzylpiperidin-4-ylidene){4-[(diethylamino)carbonyl]phenyl}methyl)phenylcarbamate;

5 4-{{4-(acetylamino)phenyl}[1-(2-fluorobenzyl)piperidin-4-ylidene]methyl}-*N,N*-diethylbenzamide;

4-{{4-(acetylamino)phenyl}[1-(3-fluorobenzyl)piperidin-4-ylidene]methyl}-*N,N*-diethylbenzamide;

4-{{4-(acetylamino)phenyl}[1-(4-fluorobenzyl)piperidin-4-ylidene]methyl}-*N,N*-diethylbenzamide;

10 and pharmaceutically acceptable salts thereof.

6. A compound according to any one of claims 1-5 for use as a medicament.

15 7. The use of a compound according to any one of claims 1-5 in the manufacture of a medicament for the therapy of pain, anxiety or functional gastrointestinal disorders.

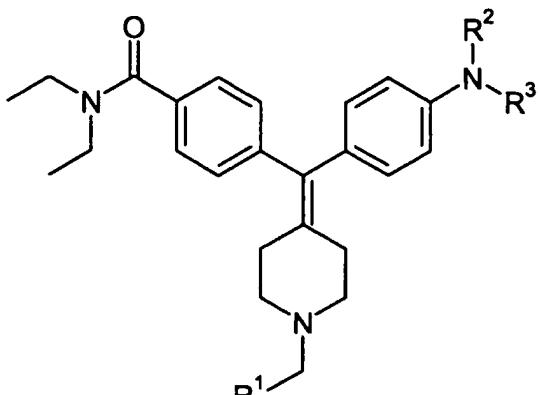
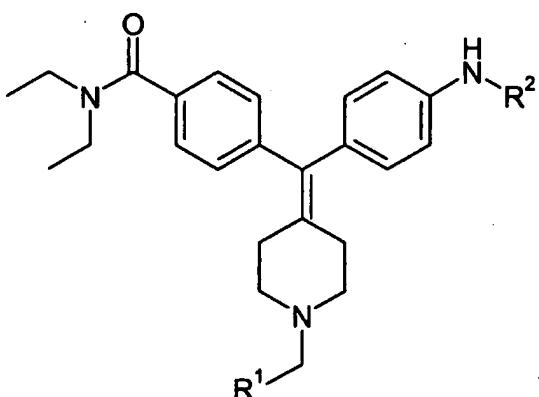
8. A pharmaceutical composition comprising a compound according to any one 20 of claims 1-5 and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

9. A method for the therapy of pain in a warm-blooded animal, comprising the step of administering to said animal in need of such therapy a therapeutically effective amount of a compound according to any one of claims 1-5.

25 10. A method for the therapy of functional gastrointestinal disorders in a warm-blooded animal, comprising the step of administering to said animal in need of such therapy a therapeutically effective amount of a compound according to any one of claims 1-5.

30 11. A process for preparing a compound of formula I, comprising:

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Ireacting a compound of formula II with X-R³ or R³-O-R³:

5

II

wherein X is halogen;

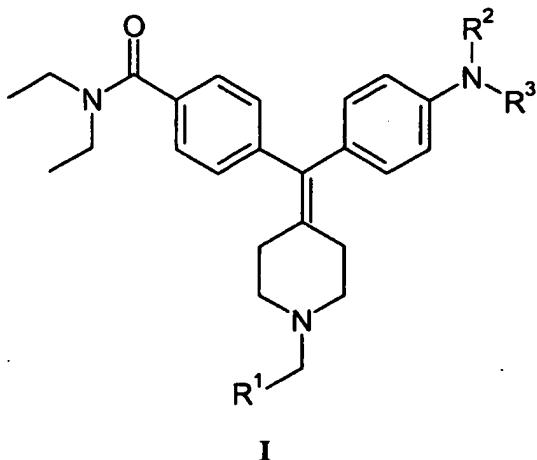
R¹ is selected from C₆₋₁₀aryl and C₂₋₆heteroaryl, wherein said C₆₋₁₀aryl and C₂₋₆heteroaryl are optionally substituted with one or more groups selected from -R,
 10 -NO₂, -OR, -Cl, -Br, -I, -F, -CF₃, -C(=O)R, -C(=O)OH, -NH₂, -SH, -NHR, -NR₂, -SR,
 -SO₃H, -SO₂R, -S(=O)R, -CN, -OH, -C(=O)OR, -C(=O)NR₂, -NRC(=O)R, and
 -NRC(=O)-OR, wherein R is, independently, a hydrogen or C₁₋₆alkyl;

R² is selected from C₁₋₃alkyl and hydrogen; and

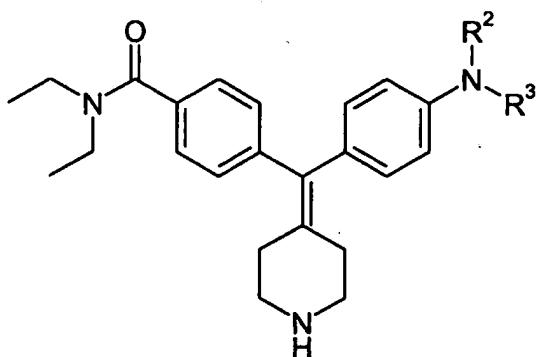
R³ is selected from -C(=O)-R⁴, -S(=O)₂-R⁴, and -C(=O)-O-R⁴, wherein R⁴ is
 15 selected from -H, C₁₋₆alkyl, C₂₋₆alkenyl and C₂₋₆alkynyl.

12. A process for preparing a compound of formula I, comprising:

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reacting a compound of formula III with R¹-CHO:



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wherein R¹ is selected from C₆₋₁₀aryl and C₂₋₆heteroaryl, wherein said C₆₋₁₀aryl and C₂₋₆heteroaryl are optionally substituted with one or more groups selected from -R, -NO₂, -OR, -Cl, -Br, -I, -F, -CF₃, -C(=O)R, -C(=O)OH, -NH₂, -SH, -NHR, -NR₂, -SR, -SO₃H, -SO₂R, -S(=O)R, -CN, -OH, -C(=O)OR, -C(=O)NR₂, -NRC(=O)R, and -NRC(=O)-OR, wherein R is, independently, a hydrogen or C₁₋₆alkyl;

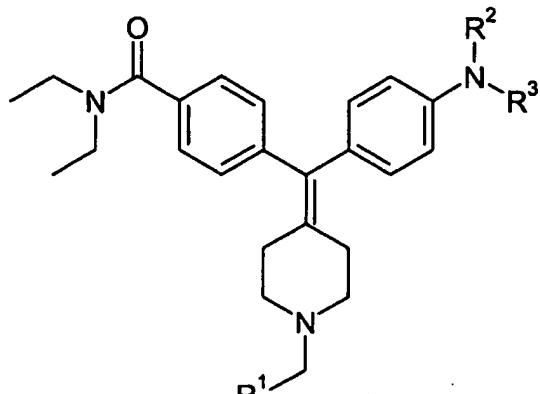
R² is selected from C₁₋₃alkyl and hydrogen; and

R³ is selected from -C(=O)-R⁴, -S(=O)₂-R⁴, and -C(=O)-O-R⁴, wherein R⁴ is selected from -H, C₁₋₆alkyl, C₂₋₆alkenyl and C₂₋₆alkynyl.

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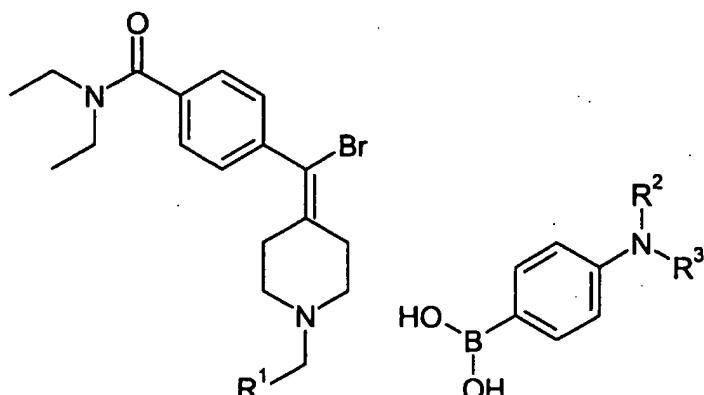
13. A process for preparing a compound of formula I, comprising:

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I

reacting a compound of formula IV with a compound of formula V or esters thereof:

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IVV

wherein R¹ is selected from C₆₋₁₀aryl and C₂₋₆heteroaryl, wherein said C₆₋₁₀aryl and C₂₋₆heteroaryl are optionally substituted with one or more groups selected from -

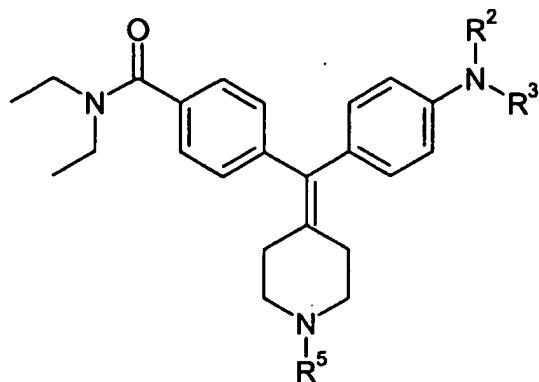
10 R, -NO₂, -OR, -Cl, -Br, -I, -F, -CF₃, -C(=O)R, -C(=O)OH, -NH₂, -SH, -NHR, -NR₂, -SR, -SO₃H, -SO₂R, -S(=O)R, -CN, -OH, -C(=O)OR, -C(=O)NR₂, -NRC(=O)R, and -NRC(=O)-OR, wherein R is, independently, a hydrogen or C₁₋₆alkyl;

R² is selected from C₁₋₃alkyl and hydrogen; and

R³ is selected from -H, -C(=O)-R⁴, -S(=O)₂-R⁴, and -C(=O)-O-R⁴, wherein R⁴

15 is selected from -H, C₁₋₆alkyl, C₂₋₆alkenyl and C₂₋₆alkynyl.

14. A compound of formula VI, a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, diastereomers, enantiomers, or mixtures thereof:



VI

5 wherein R² is selected from C₁₋₃alkyl and hydrogen;

R³ is selected from hydrogen, -C(=O)-R⁴, -S(=O)₂-R⁴, and -C(=O)-O-R⁴,
wherein R⁴ is selected from -H, C₁₋₆alkyl, C₂₋₆alkenyl and C₂₋₆alkynyl; and

R⁵ is selected from hydrogen and -C(=O)-O-C₁₋₆alkyl.